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ABSTRACT

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PUPIL CONTROL IDEOLOGY OF TEACHERS AS IT RELATES TO MIDDLE SCHOOL CONCEPTS

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PUPIL CONTROL IDEOLOGY OF TEACHERS AS IT RELATES TO MIDDLE SCHOOL CONCEPTS

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Abstract

The purpose was to test the hypothesis that there will be statistically significant main effects and interaction effects for school level assignment (elementary, junior high, and senior high) and support for middle school organizational concepts on pupil control ideology. A random sample of 252 teachers participated. A two-way analysis of variance partially supported the hypothesis with statistically significant main effects. A one-way analysis of variance with contrasts revealed that junior high teachers were significantly more custodial than either elementary or senior high teachers. A chi-square test for independence revealed a trend for teachers to support middle school organizational concepts.

Objective

When middle schools are adopted in lieu of junior high schools, grade level reorganization usually is necessary and the personnel officer must, in most cases, look to the existing teacher ranks for candidates to assign at the middle school level. What kinds of teachers are recommended for middle schools and where are they likely to be found? When judgments on classroom assignment are based on expediency, rather than plan, and teachers are "regarded as interchangeable cogs in a machine" (Greene, 1971, p. 197), individuality is the forfeit. Teachers differ from one another in many ways, and pupil control ideology is one dimension of the teachers' individuality (Willower, Eidell, & Hoy, 1967) that seems important to middle school philosophy. The objective, therefore, was to investigate teachers' pupil control ideology as it related to their propensity to support middle school organizational concepts in order to operationally enhance a plan for selection of teachers best suited to provide an effective middle school program.

Theoretical Concepts

Middle school is defined as an organizational plan for pupils between elementary and senior high school that includes some lower combination of grades than the

traditional 6-3-3, and does not include grade nine. A national survey in 1967 (Cuff) reported that 55% of the middle schools operated with a 5-3-4 organizational plan. A later survey (Hunt, Berg, & Doyle, 1970) reported that the 6-2-4 plan was the most popular pattern. General agreement exists, however, that pupils between 10 and 14 years of age should be considered for enrollment in the middle school, even though current research does not support any one organizational plan as superior over all others (Alexander, Williams, Compton, Hines, Prescott, & Kealy, 1969).

Middle school teacher qualifications are based upon the dynamics of the pupils' developmental transition from childhood to adolescence; pupils who require a program designed to bridge, but differ from, elementary and senior high school (Alexander et al., 1969). Eichhorn (1966) developed a framework of essential attributes for middle school teachers. This was built upon an optimum school environment for the "transescent" pupils' needs both for emancipation and security: adult associates who are personally secure, understanding, resourceful, adaptable, enthusiastic, cooperative, and have a sense of humor. Teacher-pupil interaction is viewed as a curricular consideration and, in that context, the teacher's personality and pupil control ideology functions as a component of the school program and becomes a unique dimension (Alexander at al., 1969; Eichhorn, 1966).

Pupil control ideology is defined as the teacher's internalized ideas and attitudes concerning the management of pupil behavior as it relates to interaction in the school organization. The school is viewed as a service organization that is required to render membership and service to clients who are compelled to be members (Carlson, 1964). Pupil control was conceptualized by Willower, Eidell, and Hoy (1967) as ideal types ranging on a continuum from "humanistic" to "custodial." The typology for the model was adapted from work by Gilbert and Levinson (1957) that dealt with staff control behavior with patients in mental hospitals. The theory was based on the premise that group life, in the societal context, implies restraint and requirement of behavior, and that rules, norms, and role expectations are

controlled through systematic manipulation of rewards or sanctions. Sanctions are described as either punitive, using such devices as coercion, ridicule, withholding rewards, and imposed discipline; or non-punitive, which utilizes understanding, empathy, appeal to the individual's sense of right and wrong, and self-discipline. Humanistic ideology reflects an orientation to individual students in a trusting, accepting atmosphere, while custodial ideology reflects an orientation that is impersonal and stresses maintance of order. Willower, Eidell, and Hoy (1967) used these theoretical concepts to develop the Pupil Control Ideology (PCI) questionnaire.

Rationale and Hypothesis

The middle school offers a new philosophical outlook that emphasizes the individual pupil (Romano, Georgiady, & Heald, 1973). The nonhomogeneity of pupils between elementary and senior high school is generally recognized in the literature (Alexander et al., 1969; Davis, 1972; Eichhorn, 1966; Havighurst, 1968). Atkins (1968) contended that the attitude of the middle school was its unique characteristic; the transitional pupil is valued, approached with understanding, and recognized as an individual.

The physical growth rate of the pupil in the "middle" often is erratic and uneven (Eichhorn, 1966). Transescence, therefore, is a time when the pupil has a need to understand growth changes (Eichhorn, 1968; Thornberg, 1970) and, according to Eichhorn (1968), the program should be characterized by the concept of "know thyself." Georgiady, Riegle, and Romano (1974) regarded transescence as a critical time of sensitivity and acute perception, when the pupil's self-concept is affected. They urged a continuous progress program with social experiences; because, they contended that the transescent pupil has been separated from his family and the rest of the adult world and needs the interaction skills that allow peer acceptance. Wattenberg (1969) called this a time of "genetic unfolding," which required a program designed to allow pupils an opportunity to establish heterosexuality, practice adult roles, and firm-up ego identity. Musholt (1974) alluded to the traditionally

held concept that pupils are expected to adjust to the school, and posited that, when the school has not fostered adjustment to the pupil, the pupil has faced deprecation and humiliation. He urged middle schools to make the development of good self-concepts a central theme of the program.

Flexibility was cited as an important way to allow the middle school pupil ample opportunity to grow: flexible scheduling, flexible grouping, and flexible teachers have been advised. Team teaching and extended block time periods were expected to enhance flexibility (Alexander et al., 1969; Atkins, 1968; Davis, 1972; Dilg & Gatewood, 1975; Eichhorn, 1966, 1968; Georgiady et al., 1974; Howard, 1968; Trauschke & Mooney, 1972). Middle school teachers, according to Eichhorn (1966), must be adaptable enough to adjust to a flexible alteration of the daily schedule, and cooperative enough to work with other people in an interrelated curriculum that requires considerable faculty interaction. Helsel (1974) reported that dogmatism, the degree to which a person's ideologies are open or closed, is positively and significantly related to pupil control ideology and that pupil control ideology and pupil control behavior are directly and significantly correlated.

The curriculum, according to the theorists, should include creative, innovative experiences and various enrichment subjects from which to choose (Davis, 1972; Dilg & Gatewood, 1975; Eichhorn, 1966; Georgiady et al., 1974; Moss, 1969). Halpin and Goldenberg (1973) examined the relationship between teachers' creative thinking abilities, creative personality, and pupil control ideology and found that the more creative-potential teachers had more humanistic pupil control ideology. Jones and Blankenship (1970) and Hoy and Blankenship (1972) studied the pupil control ideology of high school teachers, as it related to implementing an innovative biology program, and found that teachers who held favorable attitudes toward innovation and tried the new program had more humanistic pupil control ideology than teachers who did not. Eichhorn (1966) noted that middle school pupils need a diversity of experiences and that teachers must be resourceful enough to supply them.

Open, two-way communication was noted as important (Musholt, 1974), as was the development of moral concepts and values that are deemed necessary for self-responsibility (Dilg & Gatewood, 1975 Thornburg, 1970). Flanders (1967) found that all students learned more when working with teachers using indirect flexible interaction analysis skills. Rexford, Willower, and Lynch (1972) reported that secondary teachers measured as indirect by Flander's method had more humanistic pupil control ideology than those who were not. Dobson, Goldenberg, and Elsom (1972) studied elementary teachers using the Flander's scale and found that humanistic teachers accepted and developed student ideas, lectured less frequently, and initiated student behavior more often than custodial teachers.

Willower (1965) hypothesized that: teachers who are in positions of most direct relationship with large numbers of unselected clients feel most threatened; and that youth-clients at the secondary level are perceived as potentially more rebellious and resistant to organizational control, because of their size and maturity, than the child-clients at the elementary level. This rationale was basic to several studies which found that secondary teachers and principals were more custodial than elementary school teachers and principals (Hoy, 1968; Willower, 1965; Willower et al., 1967, 1969; Willower & Landis, 1970; Yuskiewicz & Willower, 1973). Further, a larger staff size and more departmentalized curriculum at the senior high school level tends to make for a more closed, bureaucratic organizational design. Studies show that teachers in relatively open organizational climates have more humanistic pupil control ideologies than those in relatively closed climates (Appleberry & Hoy, 1969; Hoy & Appleberry, 1970), that secondary teachers become significantly more bureaucratic as they gained experience (Kuhlman & Hoy, 1974), and that high bureaucraticization, high pupil control, and low achievement were correlated (Anderson, 1971).

One of the major criticisms of the extant junior high school is its operational proximity to the senior high school societal image, a "junior" to the high school (Dilg & Gatewood, 1975); however, preparation for teachers of early adolescent pupils

is still largely accomodated through "geared down" senior high school educational training programs (Howard, 1969). Even after 60 years, most junior high schools are without teachers trained specifically for work at the "middle" level, because training programs are not available (Vars, 1969); teachers appear to be recruited, rather than trained, for pupils between elementary and senior high school.

Middle schools are described in the literature as recent organizational innovations that are different from extant junior high schools in concept, teacher requirements, and grade level organization which usually includes younger pupils. Personnel specifications for middle school teachers include attributes that are (a) directly related to pupil developmental needs, (b) descriptively possible, and (c) generally accepted by the authorities in the area. Humanistic pupil control appears compatible with descriptors for middle school teachers. Special training for "middle" school teachers is not readily available and junior high schools have traditionally employed teachers trained in high school methods; studies reveal that high school teachers tend to have pupil control ideology that is more custodial than humanistic.

Middle schools, which preclude continuation of the traditional junior high school organization, affect the organizational structure of both the elementary and senior high school. Teacher assignment presents a serious problem when a major reorganization of grade level structure is adopted and a plan for personnel action would be needed.

Ideologies are reflective of aggregate ideas and attitudes gleaned from the societal milieu of an individual, and Helsel (1974) found that control ideology and control behavior are directly and significantly correlated. According to this rationale, if teachers can be expected to actualize controlling behavior in accord with their ideologies, if humanistic pupil control is compatable with recommendations for middle school teachers, if junior high teachers have traditionally employed teachers trained in senior high methods, if senior high school teachers are custodial in their attitude toward pupil control, and if middle schools require humanistic

pupil control ideology, then, we may expect to find more prospective middle school teachers at the elementary than at the senior high school level. Based upon this reasoning, the following hypothesis was drawn: There will be statistically significant main effects and interaction effects for school level assignment (elementary, junior high and senior high) and support for middle school organizational concepts on pupil control ideology.

Methodology

The Pupil Control Ideology Form (Willower et al., 1967) was employed to measure the dependent variable, the teachers' pupil control ideology, on a "humanistic" to "custodial" continuum. Each item has a five-point Likert type scale scored from five (strongly agree) to one (strongly disagree). Eighteen of the items are stated as positive to the custodial viewpoint, and two items are positive to the humanistic view. The theoretical range of scores is 20 to 100; the higher the score, the more custodial the pupil control ideology.

Willower et al. (1967) reported that the reliability for PCI Form was tested with a split-half reliability coefficient calculated by correlating even-item subscores with odd-item subscores (N = 170). A Pearson product-moment yielded a coefficient of .91, and a Spearman-Brown formula yielded a corrected coefficient of .95. The researchers repeated the test for reliability with a smaller sample (N = 55) and found a .83 for the Pearson, and a .91 for the Spearman-Brown. The known-groups technique was used to support the construct validity of the measure.

Teachers declared support or nonsupport for middle school organizational concepts by answering either "yes" or "no" to the following question: Would you personally support a middle school designed for pupils 10 to 14 years of age, in grades 6, 7, and 8?

Data Source

Subjects for an individual unit of measure were randomly selected from the total classroom teacher population of a unified district in a midwestern city with

a population of approximately 265,000. All subjects were drawn from the ranks of regular classroom teachers. Special purpose teachers, counselors, coordinators, administrators, and all other supportive teaching personnel were excluded from the sample. The individual teacher's anonymity was assured through a cooperative arrangement with the teachers' bargaining unit. Two hundred and fifty-two (70%) usable returns were collected; 69% (N = 62) of the elementary, 67% (N = 121) junior high, and 77% (N = 69) senior high school teachers responded with usable data.

Results

To test the hypothesis, a two-way analysis of variance was computed for PCI scores with school level assignment (elementary, junior high and senior high) as one independent variable, and support for middle school organizational concepts (MSOC) (yes versus no) as the other. The results disclosed support for the first main effect, that there was a significant difference in pupil control ideology between elementary, junior high and senior high school teachers ($F = 13.67$, $df = 2/234$, $p < .001$). The second main effect, that there was a significant difference in PCI between teachers who support MSOC and those who do not, was also supported ($F = 16.10$, $df = 1/234$, $p < .001$). High support for MSOC and humanistic orientations are perceived together. The school level assignment by support for MSOC interaction did not reach significance ($F = .57$, $df = 2/234$, $p > .05$). The results for the two-way analysis of variance are summarized in Table 1.

Insert Table 1 about here

To specify the first main effect, a one-way analysis of variance with contrasts was applied to determine the specific significant differences for PCI scores across the three school levels. The significant difference between the groups was, again, demonstrated ($F = 16.80$, $df = 2/23$, $p < .001$). A post hoc analysis of all contrasts using the Scheffe test at .01, revealed that elementary and senior high school

teachers did not differ significantly, elementary teachers ($\bar{X}$ = 52.99) scored significantly lower than junior high school teachers ($\bar{X}$ = 59.93), senior high school teachers ($\bar{X}$ = 53.25) scored significantly lower than junior high school teachers ($\bar{X}$ = 59.93). Results for the analysis of separate variance estimates are summarized in Table 2.

Insert Table 2 about here

Conclusions

The problem for this study was stated as operational in context, and derived directly from the personnel function of teacher selection and assignment when reorganization is necessary due to adoption of middle schools in lieu of junior high schools. There is evidence that an informed awareness of the teacher's PCI, school level assignment, and support for MSOC would saliently support that function.

A major finding in this study focused on the group of teachers at the junior high school level. Several investigations have reported "secondary" teachers to be more custodial than elementary teachers (Willower et al., 1967; Willower & Landis, 1970; Yuskiewica & Willower, 1973). This study, however, revealed that the elementary and senior high school groups were not significantly different in PCI, and that the junior high school group was found to be significantly more custodial than either the elementary or the senior high school group. When the junior high school teachers were combined with another group, however, the combined group was significantly more custodial than either the elementary or the senior high school group. This appeared to cause the mean PCI scores of either the elementary or the senior high groups to be confounded when they were combined with the junior high school scores. The differences appeared to be at the junior high school level, not at the senior high school level. Findings in this study indicate that the pupil control ideology research which has used designs that group "secondary" school to include both junior

and senior high school, may have skewed results due to the effect of the junior high school group.

Results show that the junior high school group had both a more custodial mean PCI score, and was less homogeneous in PCI than either the elementary or the senior high school group. The range, standard deviation, and variance scores demonstrated a lack of consensus on PCI at the junior high school level. Junior high school teachers who did not support MSOC showed less agreement on PCI than any other group. Both the highest and lowest PCI scores came from the junior high school group.

Pupils in the years between elementary and senior high school are recognized in the literature as developmentally less homogeneous than either elementary or senior high school pupils (Alexander et al., 1969). Pupils in the "middle" years are, also, described as insecure in their process of developing emancipation, and require understanding and support from adults (Eichhorn, 1966). The findings in this study reveal that the teachers who serve these "middle" pupils are also less homogeneous in their PCI than elementary or senior high school teachers. The findings suggest speculation on whether a nonhomogeneous group of teachers make for the most satisfactory teaching-learning situation, or whether the developmental needs of "middle" pupils would be better served if their teachers were more in accord on their perceptions of pupil control. It may be further speculated that some of the reported dissatisfaction with the junior high school organization (Kindred, Wolotkiewicz, Mickelson, Coplein, & Dyson, 1976) springs from the junior high school teachers' lack of agreement on how pupils should be controlled.

Another major finding of this study focused on the saliency of the support for MSOC variable. Analyses of variance tests revealed that teachers who supported MSOC were significantly more humanistic in PCI than teachers who did not support MSOC. Humanistic PCI appears compatible with descriptors for good middle school teachers (Alexander et al., 1969; Eichhorn, 1966; Kindred et al., 1976). If, then, teachers who supported MSOC were significantly more humanistic in PCI, it would

follow that teachers deemed most desirable for the middle school design would be those teachers who supported the concepts. The findings appear to add credibility to Alexander's (1969) judgment that, until more adequate measures are devised, a teacher's expressed desire to work with middle school children in an innovative setting is an effective indicator of personal characteristics. The findings show that a teacher's expressed support for middle school organizational concepts is salient information in the personnel function.

Further study is recommended to investigate the findings in this study concerning custodial PCI at the junior high school level. Are custodial teachers directed to the junior high school through assignment, or do teachers become custodial after serving at the junior high school level? Do junior high school pupils behave in ways that teachers perceive as more threatening than do either the elementary or senior high school pupils, or are junior high school teachers less secure that either elementary or senior high school teachers? Do teachers at the junior high school level who choose to be assigned at that level have different PCI than junior high school teachers who would prefer to be at another school assignment level? Is there less teacher satisfaction at the junior high school level than at either the elementary or senior high school level, and is there a correlation between satisfaction and PCI?

Table 1

Analysis of Variance Summary: PCI with School Assignment Level by Support for Middle School Concepts

	Support for Middle School					
	NO			YES		
	Elementary	Junior High	Senior High	Elementary	Junior High	Senior High
	N=15	N=49	N=24	N=43	N=65	N=44
Means	58.20	61.92	55.71	50.77	57.72	51.46
SD	7.01	10.55	7.98	7.76	9.85	7.77

Source of Variation	SS	DF	MS	F
Support for Middle School	1295.45	1	1295.45	16.10 ***
School Assignment Level	2199.50	2	1099.75	13.67 ***
Support x Level	91.66	2	45.83	.57 NS
Residual	18830.21	234	80.47	
Total	22900.62	239	95.82	

*** $p < .001$

Table 2

Summary: Means and Scheffe Results for

the Post Hoc Analysis

Assignment Level	N	PCI Means	Contrast Values	
			Junior High	Senior High
Elementary	62	52.98	4.96 ***	.18 NS
Junior High	121	59.93		4.86 ***
Senior High	69	53.24		

*** $p < .001$

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